Survey of Latur-Bodhan Railway line

*231. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have undertaken the survey of Latur-Bodhan railway line announced by the then Railway Minister at Nanded on the 3rd March, 1996; and

(b) if so, the present status of the survey and by when the survey is likely to completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir. No such announcement was made by the then Railway Minister

(b) Does not arise.

Forest cover in North-Eastern Region

*232. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of forest cover in the North-Eastern States at the begining of 1980 and 1990;

(b) the position at the end of 1995;

(c) the reasons for reduction in the forest cover, if any; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FOREST (CAPT. JAI NARAIN PRASAD NISHAD): (a) The details of forest cover in the North-Eastern States as per the assessments of forest cover done for various periods are given in statment-I. (See below).

(b) The details of the latest assessment of forest cover of the period 1991—93 is given at Annexure-I. The assessment work of the period 1993—95 is in progress.

(c) The reasons for reduction in the forest cover are mainly due to shifting cultivation, forest fires, grazing and wide gap in demand and supply of fuelwood, fodder and small timber resulting in unsustainable withdrawals.

(d) The various steps taken by the Government to check reduction in the forest cover are given in Statement-II.

Statement-I

Details of assessment of forest cover done for the periods 1981—1983, 1989—1991 and 1991—1993

(Area in sq. km)

Name of the State	Assessment Year 1987 (for the period of 1981-83)	Assessment Year 1993 (for the period of 1989-91)	Assessment Year 1995 (for the period of 1991-1993)
1. Arunachal Pradesh	60,500	68,661	68.621
2. Assam	26,386	24,508	24,061
3. Manipur	17,679	17,621	17,558
4. Meghalaya	16,511	15,769	15,714
5. Mizoram	19,092	18,697	18,576
6. Nagaland	14,351	14,348	14,291
7. Tripura	5,743	5,538	5,538

Statement-II

Steps taken by Government to check reduction of Forest Cover in North Eastern States

(i) Draft Notification under Section 3(1) and 3(2) (xiv) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Rule 5(1) (x) and 5(2) Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, restricting certain activities in States/Union Territories of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Nagaland has been issued for protecting and improving the quality of the environment.

(ii) Guidelines have been issued to all the States/UTs to involve the village community in the protection and regeneration of forest through a mechanism of usufruct sharing and benefit distribution (Joint Forest Management).

(iii) Steps have been undertaken to restore and augment forest cover through afforestation/tree planting activities both within & outside Government forest area.